all of history [deleted with one stroke]

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by Serindrana

Summary

“Somebody got inside his head and moved all the furniture around.”

His voice is distant. His shivering has stopped, like he has reached the certainty of revelation. But he doesn’t stand up, doesn’t reach for his phone, and what he’s just said has no real bearing on the case. Will knows what happened to Abel Gideon. He’s simply rephrased it.

And yet that has struck him, somehow.

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After Abel Gideon's escape from custody, Will Graham's destruction begins to accelerate. Hannibal takes the opportunity to try a new treatment, hoping to accelerate his influence as well.

Things don't go quite how he expected.

Notes

Look, I'm a huge nerd. That's the only explanation for this. I'm sorry for everything. (More explanation in the end notes.)

Beta read by inkandplasma.

See the end of the work for more notes

It is seven thirty-three in the evening, and Will Graham is shuddering toward a breakdown in Hannibal Lecter's office.

"I don't know how to gauge who I am anymore," Will says, gripping at the arms of his chair as if for anchor. Hannibal inclines his head, wearing the specific mixture of concern and stoicism that Will responds to best. His fever is spiking; even if Hannibal could not smell it, Will's forehead is damp with sweat, and the hallucinations he has just described are far more vivid and all-encompassing than any he's shared before.

Will drags in a labored breath, bares his teeth. "I don't feel like myself," he says. It is taking all his effort to be vulnerable; the strain is obvious in how his ribs jerk, how his shivering creeps into his voice. "I feel like I have been gradually becoming different for a while. I just feel like somebody else."

Hannibal purses his lips. Decides to reward the vulnerability instead of, as he has been doing more and more lately, throwing up the wall of Will's casework just when he begins to truly ask for help.

He wants to try something a little different tonight.

"What do you feel like?" he asks.

Will rubs a hand over his face. Grimaces. "I feel crazy," he confesses.

Hannibal wants to smile. It is good to see Will finally accepting his diagnosis. He thought it would take a little more effort to get Will to stop accurately reading his own symptoms. Will deserves another reward.

"And that is what you fear most," he says, softening his voice as he offers up understanding.

But Will shakes his head.

Hannibal's frown is minute, likely invisible to everybody except the man sitting across from him. Luckily, that man is looking at his hands.

"I fear not knowing who I am," Will corrects. Pauses. Smiles that desperate smile of his, and Hannibal watches as he throws up the wall of his casework himself. Redirects himself to arguably safer ground. "That's what Abel Gideon's afraid of, isn't it?"

Hannibal feels a spark of anger at Abel Gideon. It's not the first, but it is uniquely personal. *I fear not knowing who I am.* Will's right, that is a fear distinct from the more general anxiety of madness, but his denial is intriguing. It is sharp-edged, where Hannibal expected a gentle blurring. *I feel crazy, which makes me fear not knowing who I am*, instead of, *I feel crazy, but that's not what I'm afraid of*.

Will's gaze has begun to flicker back and forth. Hannibal watches, tamping down his frustration, as Will reconfigures puzzle pieces inside his mind. Licks his lips and ventures,

still looking at nothing in particular, “Somebody got inside his head and moved all the furniture around.”

His voice is distant. His shivering has stopped, like he has reached the certainty of revelation. But he doesn’t stand up, doesn’t reach for his phone, and what he’s just said has no real bearing on the case. Will knows what happened to Abel Gideon. He’s simply rephrased it.

And yet that has struck him, somehow.

“I imagine Abel Gideon would want to find the Chesapeake Ripper to gauge who he is and who he isn’t,” Hannibal says. Will doesn’t respond. Perhaps the swelling in his brain has reached a disabling level, making Will fixate on the unremarkable. Dialed up his pattern recognition.

“Will,” Hannibal tries again. He leans forward to catch Will’s gaze. “You have *me* as your gauge.”

He watches as Will’s face goes entirely slack.

Hannibal has seen this particular response multiple times now, though never in the middle of a conversation. Will Graham is now somewhere else, in one of the shadowed corridors of his mind. This is exactly what he looked like in his lecture hall, dreaming while awake.

Hannibal memorizes the particular emptiness of Will’s eyes.

Well; this provides an opportunity. After looking his fill and receiving nothing in return except surprisingly deep and steady breathing, Hannibal stands and goes to the closet containing his respectable pharmacy. He has several options available to him, but he settles on a two-part cocktail. The amphetamine is rapid-release and ready for injection, but the sodium amytal requires a quick suspension.

Will is patient, of course, waiting for Hannibal to return a few minutes later. Blank, gone elsewhere, his body just a shell.

Hannibal indulges himself, pulls Will’s lower eyelids down to reveal dilated pupils and unmoving irises. The skin is soft and delicate. He checks Will’s pulse, too, and his response to touch. Satisfied (for now; he knows the impulse will return next time he is afforded the opportunity), he fills a syringe with twenty-five milligrams of sodium amytal and flicks it to remove any remaining air bubbles. He catches the first offlow on a gauze square, then slides the needle into a vein along Will’s throat.

Less chance he will notice the puncture there than his elbow or wrist.

The plunger depresses smoothly, and the injection site doesn’t even bleed as Hannibal removes the needle. Will turns pliant in his seat. His eyelids fall to half-mast. Another few minutes and he’ll be asleep entirely.

So Hannibal readies the amphetamine injection.

It's important, in these moments, to be deliberate. The amphetamine will render Will agitated once more; he's liable to twitch and struggle. Talk, likely at length. But the sodium amytal proved too gentle, too subtle last time. It took Will where Hannibal wanted him to go, but only by small degrees, and now there's only so much of a window left before the encephalitis has Will so firmly addled that Hannibal's voice might not get through anymore. The game will have to change, soon, and so it's time for a firmer adjustment to the pieces on the board. Together, the sodium amytal and amphetamine will render Will suggestible, amnesiac… open.

He slides the needle into another vein, still covered by Will's stubble.

It takes all of sixty seconds for the change to take hold. Will's eyes flutter open and he shivers, twitches his head to one side as if his headache is worsening. (It very well might be.)

"Hannibal?" he whispers. His eyes flicker back and forth, almost nystagmus, but in this case just a side effect of arousal, an attempt to make sense of his surroundings. His pupils contract and his breathing quickens. Not hyperventilation yet, but Will is prone to it.

"I am right here, Will," Hannibal says, offering a kindly smile with no hint of concern or worry. No need to telegraph to Will that something is wrong and, if Will doesn't steady out on his own, the incongruity will send him into a delicious spiral of addled self-doubt that he won't be able to climb out of alone.

Will's gaze tries to steady on his face, fails.

"Hannibal, I'm losing myself." His voice cracks. He manages, at last, to meet Hannibal's eyes for a few half-realized breaths, and then he covers his face with his hands. Hannibal gently guides one hand away.

"No, you were only dreaming while awake again," Hannibal says. "Do you remember where you are?"

Will almost shakes his head, but stops himself. Drops his other hand. Looks around. Recognizes the office, of course, and then hesitates, no doubt stuck on the fact that if he tells the truth, he has to make the second step himself, to confess he's lost time again. It's one thing to confess he *feels* crazy, another thing to prove it.

"Focus on me, Will," Hannibal says. That gets Will's attention back on him and a slight steadying of his pulse. "Stay with me."

A muscle twitches in his jaw. He is trying so hard to regain control of himself right now, refusing to break down fully even knowing (perhaps especially knowing) that Hannibal is here to catch him.

Will's tongue peeks out between his lips and his brow furrows. His gaze slides away from Hannibal as he struggles to think. There's no intensifying sign of fear, which is good; likely he's only trying to pick his words with care. The language regions of his temporal and frontal lobes are not directly impacted by this particular cocktail, but there's some splashover, certainly.

At last, he hazards a glance back at Hannibal. “I don’t,” he says, then stops, swallows, squirms in his seat. “I don’t want to do this again. I- *can’t*.” His voice breaks.

Hannibal doesn’t stop the sudden, curious tilt of his head.

Again.

An odd word choice, *again*. Will could very well just mean another loss of his self-awareness. This is also not the first time that Hannibal has drugged him, although he has shown no signs of remembering the other two instances. It is certainly possible that the very presence of the sodium amytal in his bloodstream has triggered the memory of the other times; even in an altered state, similar brain chemistry can ping onto fragmented memories.

That is the most reasonable response. And yet Hannibal wonders if, somehow, Will can anticipate what is about to happen next.

“Breathe, Will,” Hannibal says, pulling away just enough to retrieve the light pen. He checks the settings, then glances back up at his patient. “I want to try a new treatment modality. Please, look at me.”

Will is, instead, staring at his tie. He looks no less distraught for it; Hannibal doubts he’s appreciating the jacquard, merely trying to cling to something impersonal, but still close to Hannibal’s steadying influence.

“*Will*,” he says, more firmly this time, and Will’s head jerks up.

Hannibal flicks the switch.

The light begins to strobe. Will’s weaving, wavering gaze fixes on the pen and his brows draw together. “Easy, Will,” Hannibal murmurs against the ruffling of Will’s survival instincts. The first flashes of an electrical storm are building in his cortex, and Hannibal wonders what it feels like. If it feels like anything at all. Not a physical sensation, likely, but perhaps there is an aura. An impending feeling of lightness. Even pleasure.

He’ll have to ask, if the drugs are still in effect when Will can speak again.

It’s another thirty seconds, at most, before Will’s eyes roll back. He begins to tremble but doesn’t otherwise lose muscle tone or control. He remains upright even as his shuddering turns violent, and he lets out a weak keening sound, but his bladder hasn’t let go, and he’s absolutely exquisite in his controlled destruction.

Hannibal allows himself another indulgence. He leans forward and settles his free hand against Will’s throat once more, feels his rabbiting pulse.

And then-

And then he’s on the floor, gasping for breath as a knee collides sharp with his diaphragm, a wholly controlled strike that is paired with the full weight of Will Graham on top of him, and two hands locked tight around his throat.

“Sh, shh, shh, shhhh.” Will’s eyes aren’t rolled back in his head anymore. They’re fixed on Hannibal’s face instead, Will’s whole expression something like pity. Like he’s trying to soothe a scared animal.

There’s no recognition.

Hannibal remains very still. He only dares a slight lift of his chin, to get a little more air and see what Will does next.

Will blinks. Frowns. Still no recognition, though his hands loosen just a fraction.

“You’re not Winston,” Will says.

The dog?

Hannibal discards the thought the next instant. There’s no room for it, not with Will tightening his grip again with a feral curl to his upper lip. There’s no hesitation, not the slightest flicker of care, and for a brief moment Hannibal thinks, perhaps, that he’s somehow sent Will headlong back into one of his killers’ mindsets.

And then he takes advantage of the fact that his hands are free and slams a fist into Will’s kidney.

Will doesn’t let go, but he does falter, just a little, just enough for Hannibal to buck up and unseat him. They roll, and Hannibal jerks back and upright fast enough that Will can’t keep his grip on his throat. Instead, he grabs a handful of Hannibal’s hair, and his other fist crashes into Hannibal’s jaw.

It hurts, and Hannibal files away the sensation for later. He didn’t think the first time Will would strike him would be so soon, or with so much determination, and yet- it’s still as perfect as he’d hoped for.

He bears down on Will then, trying to flip him onto his belly, get an arm around his throat. But Will is slippery, all his inhibitions vanished. He kicks directly into Hannibal’s patella then shoves the heel of his hand into Hannibal’s gut. Hannibal breaks away, panting, as soon as it becomes clear that Will won’t go down easily without a weapon.

And, if he is being honest with himself, because he wants to get a better look at this savage creature of his.

“Will,” Hannibal says, working his aching jaw a little. “It’s seven fifty-eight in the evening. You’re in Baltimore, in my office. Can you hear me?”

The other man grins as he rolls to his feet. “*Your office*,” he repeats, licking his split lip. “That would be more helpful if I knew who you were.” His gaze skims the layout of the room efficiently, but as if he’s never seen it before, catching on potential threats and weapons.

“You don’t recall?” Hannibal circles, moving toward one of the side tables. “I’m your psychiatrist, Will. You’re having an episode.”

Will's brows lift, and his expression turns to mock concern. "Am I… unstable?" he asks.

There's no trace of his earlier distress. If anything, he sounds amused.

Hannibal reaches the table. Will has reached the armchair he started in. He makes a production of looking down at the discarded syringes. The still-flashing strobe. "Or," he murmurs, "have you destablized me?"

Will looks back up at him. Smiles.

Hannibal has seen Will ready to defend himself enough times now to know this isn't his normal demeanor. He's moving not like a man who's afraid his psychiatrist might want to hurt him, but like a predator in his own right.

He looks confident. Steady. Completely alert, despite the drugs coursing through his bloodstream that should have him flat on the ground.

He looks… hungry.

It's like seeing the face of God. He will have to draw Will like this, if Hannibal survives the evening. It's one thing to have pictured this moment, the knowing fire in Will's eyes, the casual tilt of his head as he takes his prey's measure; it's another, entirely, to bask in it.

"Will," he sighs, feeling just a little bit helpless. It's an awesome feeling, in the original sense: full of awe, full of terror.

Will rolls his shoulders, chews at his split lip in thought. His eyes flicker back and forth, back and forth, as if he's trying to remember something. "Hannibal Lecter," he replies after another moment. "I trusted you."

He sounds impressed.

"So you have recall, if you reach for it," Hannibal says. "You are still, in some way, yourself." Not, then, in a killer's mind. Dissociative, perhaps, but not in any standard way- and a dissociative episode might have followed on a seizure, but not interrupted one.

Hannibal is missing something.

He watches closely as Will crouches. Will picks up the strobe, turns it off. Picks up, next, one of the syringes. He stands, holding it up to the light so that the needle gleams. His mind is working; it's obvious in the sharpness of his gaze. He's calculating, Hannibal expects, the best way to use that needle to incapacitate him.

Hannibal is almost giddy to see him try.

But he doesn't move. Instead, he meets Hannibal's gaze. No aversion. No overstimulation. "You thought you were the first to root around inside the bone arena of my skull, didn't you?" Will muses. "No. Not by a long shot, Dr. Lecter."

Another piece clicks, and Hannibal bites down on the reflex to bare his teeth in a snarl.

This is an induced state of some kind. Just like Will's lost time. His panic. His desperation. An induced state is no less real for being caused with purpose; reaction to external stimuli is half the equation of any human.

But he hates that somebody else crafted what he's seeing now.

Will rolls forward onto the balls of his feet, bounces slightly. "You're *jealous*," he says.

And Hannibal loses the little thread of control holding him back. He lunges.

Will dances back, sidestepping the armchair expertly. Hannibal knows the room better, but Will has been all over it in his anxious wanderings over the last few months. That knowledge is still in there somewhere. And where Hannibal is emotional, Will is- not. Delighted, yes, and engaged, but not compromised, and their waltz makes no progress as they circle one another.

This is so far from how things are supposed to go.

The plan has always been, on the off chance that Hannibal lost Will's trust so soon, that Hannibal would subdue him quickly. Kill him, if necessary (and he had expected it would be), as soon as wary suspicion turned to horror in Will's eyes. Will wouldn't have been ready for it, even if he thought he knew what Hannibal was. No matter how deadly Will can be, his panic and desperation to be wrong would have made him clumsy. It would have been disappointing, yes, and too easy, but it would have been safe.

This isn't safe. Hannibal isn't thinking of safety as he pursues Will. He lets his presence unfurl from the bounds of his person suit, fill the space in a way he doesn't allow when he is Dr. Lecter. It's a subtle but undeniable shift, enough to make most people retreat instinctually.

Will retreats, but it's not instinctual at all. No twitching, no stumbling, just smooth steps back and back, letting Hannibal herd him.

Which means he wants to go where he's headed, toward Hannibal's desk. Probably intends to use something on it as an improvised weapon. That would certainly be more effective than the syringe. It's what Hannibal would do. It's what Will Graham, special agent for the FBI, would be trained to do.

It's what Will Graham, constructed by another's hand, is *going* to do. That extinguishes Hannibal's delight and pride in an instant.

He needs to finish this, regardless of his curiosity. Regain control of the situation. That means subduing him, quickly, avoiding leaving any marks on Will that won't be explainable when he wakes.

If he wakes.

The momentary flash of a world in which his Will Graham is gone, entirely, kindles rage in him so hot he can barely think. If Hannibal ever comes face to face with the sculptor behind his Galatea, he will flay the man alive over weeks.

Will reaches the desk. Lifts a brow as he tosses aside the syringe and reaches back. Extends his fingers and *almost* has a hold on the clock (almost funny, really, given everything) when Hannibal lunges again and this time, *this time*, Will has nowhere to go, and Hannibal drags him back hard into a chokehold. Will snarls, kicks back at his already-swelling knee, but Hannibal is broader, heavier, and ready this time. He doesn't falter, only hauls his arm harder across Will's throat.

"Easy, Will," he says, jerking them both away from the desk. Will's left hand doesn't connect with the clock. His right lifts, strikes at Hannibal's shoulder so very like how Miriam Lass had, but he's already weakening, just a little.

And then he goes limp.

It's a ploy, of course, and one Hannibal will not dignify with a response. He does not loosen his grip.

But he also doesn't tighten it, and with Will's muscles slack, he has just enough room to turn his head and bite into Hannibal's cheek. He doesn't hesitate at the resistance of flesh, bites hard and deep, and Hannibal can't quite stop his pained gasp, can't stop his grip from slipping.

Will breaks the hold.

Hannibal grabs for his scalpel.

Will twists to face him, lips scarlet, teeth bloody, and doesn't flinch when Hannibal opens a bloody slash across his forearm, drives the scalpel in just above and behind his elbow. Instead, he grins and seizes Hannibal's neck and shoulders and slams him against the wood of the desk.

Hannibal barely misses out on a concussion and loses his grip on the scalpel, but is thrown close enough to the lamp to take hold of it and swing, hard, for Will's skull.

Will ducks it and disarms him, of course. But it gets him close enough for Hannibal to get a fist in his hair, to snap his face down and into his knee, while he grits out, "And where is this rage coming from, Will?"

Will's nose doesn't break, but only because Will twists and takes the brunt of it on his forehead. There's another second, maybe two, of grappling, before Will strikes a nerve bundle and Hannibal has to let go. Will falls back, grinning, wiping one hand across his bloody mouth.

"Free association, doctor. Indulge me," Will pants, backing away. Somehow, he's got ahold of his syringe again, and he lifts it between them like a rapier. There's no fear in his eyes, none at all, and his cheeks are flushed with high color. He looks glorious, and Hannibal should resist the temptation of his own curiosity.

But he does want answers. He wants to know exactly who to blame for this beautiful disaster.

“If you insist,” Hannibal replies, shrugging out of his suit jacket, considering its merits as a makeshift retarius’s net.

Will inclines his head in acknowledgement. Licks some of Hannibal’s blood from his lips, and Hannibal suspects he knows how much that gets his attention.

“Project MKUltra,” Will purrs.

That brings him up short. He straightens, cocks his head. “Conspiracy theories,” he says, trying to guess what Will is playing at and coming up, for once, short. “CIA programs.”

“Ethical violations,” Will offers with that same infuriatingly smug lift of his brows.

Hannibal’s upper lip twitches halfway to a snarl. He advances a few steps. “Lysergic acid diethylaminde. Which I did not administer, I will note.”

“I know.” Will grins and enunciates his next two words: “Psychic. Driving.”

Hannibal cants his head, grants the point. It’s certainly a relevant topic. The implications, however…

“MKUltra was discontinued in 1973, Will,” he chides. “Do you really mean to suggest you were a part of it?” He would have been little more than an infant. No, this is quite clearly an attempt by Will’s threatened, desperate mind to make sense of the chaos that has been introduced to it.

Will doesn’t show any sign of concern or doubt. He just shrugs. “And does that mean the government abandoned its research protocols entirely?”

No, of course not. Even outside the realm of conspiracy thought, there’s enough historical evidence for the continued abuses of the CIA. The FBI as well, for that matter; they both have seen scraps of it, can see Jack going down those paths in the service of (he will tell himself) the greater good. But to make the leap from that pragmatic assessment to the idea that Will Graham is, somehow, a manipulated, crafted, dangerous asset-

And yet, here in front of him is a manipulated, crafted, dangerous man who responded quite abnormally to a series of treatments pioneered by the very program Hannibal is trying to dismiss.

“Wicked boy,” he murmurs.

Will’s still grinning. “You woke me up,” he says, and looks delighted at it.

Hannibal spreads out the facts once more, his observations, his theories, much like Will had done regarding Abel Gideon. Rearranges them. Finds himself lacking only a few pieces to make sense of it all, filled in instead by (unfortunately) pop culture understandings of sleeper agents, of fractured psyches.

“MKUltra was designed, to my understanding, to find effective and reliable mind control substances,” he ventures. “To perfect interrogation and control.”

“And so what, exactly, were you trying to do to me?” Will’s eyes widen into a facsimile of guileless innocence.

Hannibal finds he wants to be honest, much to his surprise. Still, honesty might provoke more anger. Might make Will shut down.

And he doesn’t want that.

“I was only trying to provide stability,” he says, choosing a near cousin of the truth instead. He spreads his hands, gentles his posture. “A narrative, for you to cling to when all else became… unclear.”

He takes a step forward.

Will does not retreat.

Hannibal advances until there’s no more than six inches between them. He waits for a renewed attack and doesn’t get one. Will only tilts his blood-slick chin up the few degrees needed to keep their gazes locked.

He looks healthier than he has in many weeks, healthier than he had fifteen minutes ago. His hair is still sweat-plastered to his forehead, of course, and there’s nothing to be done about the shadows below his eyes, but he’s not twitching, not trembling. He’s not moving in constant near-panic, and he’s not abstracted, drawn off into his waking nightmares or the odd emptiness of his lost time.

“And you’ve made me need that narrative,” Will suggests. “Is that correct, Dr. Lecter?”

Hannibal answers only with a small, pleased smile. “Now that you are awake, as you put it, what will you do? Will you kill me, Will? Out of self preservation, perhaps? Or revenge. Or just… programming.” That last is offered with some hesitation, the concept still alien, but it fits all the details Hannibal has available to him.

He doesn’t like it.

“Programming is a very simplistic word,” Will muses. “But not inaccurate.”

“And are you a killer?” Hannibal keeps his voice light. Doesn’t let either the hunger or the jealousy out to play. It doesn’t matter, really, if Will kills due to the machinations of some shadowed segment of the CIA, though it does sour the prospect of drawing that same impulse from him. Sours, too, the memory of his delight when Will confessed how good it had felt to take Garret Jacob Hobb’s life. Cheapens it. If he has been courting the imprint of another, and not Will himself-

“I have the capacity,” Will says, pulling him back. “The training.”

“The inclination?”

“The taste for it.”

Hannibal's lips press into a thin line. "Built into you."

"No," Will says, leaning in closer. "No, that was already there. But you knew that too, didn't you?"

A thrill dances over Hannibal's nerves. His scalp tingles, his teeth ache. It could be manipulation, of course, saying what Will believes Hannibal wants to hear, but he doesn't think so. He doesn't think every dark shadow he's seen lurking below Will's surface is constructed.

It's not safe, being so close. Hannibal can think of upwards of thirty six ways to subdue or kill Will, and suspects Will can see just as many in return. But he can't bring himself to step away. For all the threat dripping from Will's words, he's not holding himself like a man ready to attack, and the tension running between them is heady. He wants to linger in it a little longer.

He wonders how much longer Will can remain in this state. Eventually, his lucidity will be broken by physiology, if nothing else. Hannibal parts his lips to ask.

And then Will drives the syringe into Hannibal's shoulder hard enough for the needle to scrape the ball of his humerus, hard enough for Hannibal to drop to his good knee in reflex as the needle snaps off. Hannibal snarls and seizes Will by the waist, sending them both crashing onto the floor again.

Will gasps, arches, as Hannibal bears down on him. Wraps his arms around Hannibal, and brings his hand down hard on the wound.

Hannibal hisses, digs his fingers into Will's belly, but the pain leaves him distracted for just a moment. It's enough. Will twines their legs together, throws his weight, and they roll. Will presses the full length of his body against Hannibal's, and-

Ah.

He's aroused.

Above him, Will laughs. It's breathy, gusting over his jaw. Despite his delight, he looks-surprised. Stunned. He presses the thigh he's got between Hannibal's legs down a little, encouraging, testing.

And Hannibal stirs, too.

"What *have* you been doing to me?" Will murmurs, frowning now at the ridge of his erection.

"Nothing," Hannibal answers, truthfully. To say the thought hadn't occurred to him would've been a blatant lie, of course, and he does not lie to himself. But none of his manipulations have been so crass. That Will is hard simply from the act of attacking him, of trying to kill him, speaks to… well. Many interesting things that go right to Hannibal's groin.

But that is not, unfortunately, the simplest explanation.

“What have they done to *you*?” Hannibal returns. He has had more than a few patients who are drawn to conspiracy theories; he knows that one prominent one regarding MKUltra is that participants were subjected to sexual grooming, were sent out into the field to entrap targets after.

“Not this,” Will says.

Hannibal’s pupils blow wide.

“They drugged me, of course. Broke down every inch of my psyche, taught me how best to kill, honed my mind to a fine edge. But not this.” Will rocks down against him again, a little breathy moan slipping past his red lips. His eyelids flutter. He is terrible and beautiful, and Hannibal should be taking advantage of his distraction.

But he’s distracted, too.

“Honed your mind, Will?” he breathes. His hands are on Will’s hips now, gripping hard, and he should be pushing Will away. He isn’t, though. He’s holding him close and rolling his own hips.

“They didn’t choose me because I’m a good shot,” Will says, voice tight and thin. He grins. Winks.

Understanding clicks into place, and how has he never considered it before? “The pendulum,” Hannibal gasps. A mental construct, learned somewhere, to access a frame of mind almost supernaturally precise and immersive.

“The pendulum,” Will agrees. No, encourages. He’s enjoying watching Hannibal put the pieces together, almost as much as he’s enjoying rocking his thigh against Hannibal’s cock.

It’s making it very hard to think, but not impossible. “A cultivated skill. The bones were there before, I imagine, but- *ah*-”

“But we shaped them into something more useful.”

“And yet they left you vulnerable.” He swallows, fights the urge to arch. Focuses on the pain in his shoulder. “They let Jack Crawford prey on you.”

He expects a counter that Jack Crawford has clearance. That he, somehow, knows, or is at least allowed to use Will’s skill.

Instead, he gets: “It’s not smart to forge a weapon and then leave it unattended.”

A non-sequitur, and Hannibal has to bite the inside of his cheek to focus. He tastes blood. Will might only mean that he is not unattended, that he is utilized, but that doesn’t feel right. Vulnerable, and unattended. The beautiful breakdown of Will Graham, writ large over the last weeks.

He meets Will’s gaze.

“A self-destruct mechanism, then? And have you been- unattended?”

But of course he has; Hannibal would know if Will had a… handler. This Winston, Hannibal gathers, whom Will has (likely unconsciously) named his newest stray after. He wonders just how long Will has been alone. Abandoned. Rotting from the inside out, even without Hannibal’s assistance.

He wonders if the encephalitis is a final failsafe. Seemingly impossible, to trigger such a destructive, strange illness simply from disuse.

And yet…

“It has been-” Will says, and then he stills. Sits back a little, and Hannibal wants to snarl from the loss of contact. (He resists, of course). “Two years, six months, and eleven days.”

Hannibal can’t help it. “Since your last confession, Will?”

Will seems to find it just as funny, beams as he leans down. As he brushes his lips against Hannibal’s, sending lightning through every myelar sheath in his autonomic nervous system.

“And what of Winston?” Hannibal asks, letting his head tilt back as Will nips at his throat.

“Don’t know,” Will murmurs, vibrations against his skin. “But you seem to have replaced him. Lucky you.”

Hannibal’s hands clench on his hips at that, and this time he can’t stop himself from arching, from hissing out a thick, low moan.

“You like that,” Will says, and before Hannibal can deny or assent, he bites.

It’s gentle, doesn’t leave another oozing wound, but Hannibal’s thoughts white out for one blissful, hot second. “Yes,” he hears himself whisper. “Yes, yes, lucky me.” If he can’t shape Will, he wants to hold the leash, and really, there are so many more possibilities now. And Will, rampant above him, violent and needy, is what he’d hoped to shape Will into with time.

Now he doesn’t have to wait. Now all he has to do is buck up, dig his fingers into the waistband of Will’s slacks, slide his hands between them to fumble with his fly. Will tips his hips forward obligingly, but he also puts a hand on Hannibal’s injured shoulder and shoves.

Hannibal hisses, and lifts one hand to press into the bloody slash across Will’s arm.

It’s easy, inevitable, from there. They pull at each other’s clothes until they’re both just bare enough, until Hannibal can fit a hand around their cocks and hold tight as Will ruts into the circle of his fingers. Hannibal’s head lolls back against the floor of his office, and he watches with hungry eyes as Will’s eyelids flutter. So close to how they move in the throws of seizure, really, but then there is that feral intelligence behind them, focusing in on his lips, his jaw, the tensing of his muscles.

“Like this,” Will whispers. Jerks his hips. Changes the angle and *oh*, his cock catches on Hannibal’s foreskin, drags down with aching intensity. Hannibal’s not going to last. His body

thrums with adrenaline and a focused psychical *need*, and it ramifies when Will meets his gaze again, chews his bottom lip to get a little more of Hannibal's blood on his tongue.

"Beautiful," Hannibal says, helpless, hips undulating up, hands clutching tight. There are so many things to do, tastes he wants to capture, but he doesn't want this moment to break.

"Feels good," Will gasps. He whines, squeezing his eyes shut. His hand folds around Hannibal's, tightens his grip just a fraction. "Feels good, don't stop- don't leave-"

Hannibal leans up, mouths at the line of Will's jaw. "No, never."

"Yours. *Yours*." It's a claiming, an imprinting, and Hannibal hisses to hear it, grabs Will tight and rolls them over again. Will lets him, head falling back, throat exposed. Hannibal can't stop himself; he nips, bites, suckles, until there are livid bruises, undeniable, recognizable. If Will wakes up, when Will wakes up, he'll have questions.

Hannibal doesn't care.

He catches Will's lips with his own, plunges his tongue into Will's mouth, and lays claim. Memorizes every inch, catalogues every taste, and when Will comes, sobbing, he drinks down every little sound that issues from his throat. He should, he thinks, feel powerful, but all he feels is lost, drowning, following Will over the precipice just three thrusts later. His entire body convulses, and he breaks their searing kiss, drops his head to the floor beside Will's throat.

Pants. Tries to pull himself back together.

It takes a few minutes, shameful and heated. Will comes back to himself faster, of course; how else could this evening go? But he doesn't tease or mock, just slides his hands over every bit of Hannibal's body he can reach. Cups his ass, maps the contours of his chest.

At last, Hannibal shoves himself away. Stands and zips up his slacks, looking down at the bloody, flushed ruin that is Will Graham on his office floor.

He finds his suit jacket and shrugs back into it. His shoulder protests, but there's no time to dig the needle out just now; he'll handle it once Will is taken care of. There are more urgent matters. He picks up the plastic syringe barrel. The discarded scalpel. Cleans up all the evidence, and behind him, he can hear Will getting to his feet, too. Putting his clothing back in order. Dropping, once more, into his armchair.

"Not bad," Will declares.

Hannibal quirks a brow as he takes his seat opposite and looks him over. Hannibal's managed to lap most of the blood off Will's face, but there's still a few streaks. His shirt, of course, is ruined. Slashed and stained with blood and semen, both of theirs mingled together.

All told, Hannibal came out on top, if only because he had the presence of mind to get his jacket off early. The stains on his clothing are covered now. The bruise coming up on his jaw

will take a little longer to show. The bite on his cheek- well, it will just take some aftercare, a day or two nowhere near Jack Crawford.

“Shirt, please,” Hannibal says, and Will, obligingly, unbuttons it, leaving him in a bloody but less shredded undershirt. He tosses his flannel to Hannibal with a pleased twitch of his lips.

Hannibal folds it and sets it carefully aside.

“The cut,” he says, nodding to the mostly-clotted slash across Will’s arm. “How will you explain it?”

Will considers, thumbing the wound. It isn’t deep. “Spooked dog. Sharp claws.”

“And the puncture?”

Will lifts his shoulder, rolls it. “It’s pretty far back. I might not notice.”

***I** might not notice*. Interesting.

“Will you remember this?” Hannibal asks, smoothing out a few wrinkles in his slacks.

There are a hundred practical reasons for asking, but really, he’s just- excited. Delighted at every option. Will, unknowing, helpless to save himself unless Hannibal plays just the right tune to alert him again. Will, taking actions subconsciously to counter Hannibal or aid him, making the game just that much more complex.

Will, looking at him from across a dead body, hands slick and hot with blood, greeting him with a wink.

But for now, Will just settles back into the armchair. Their eye contact seems to be feeding him, making him burn bright as magnesium combusting at the first drop of rain. Hannibal can’t bring himself to look away.

Will grins. Tilts his head back at last, closes his eyes. “Wouldn’t you like to know?”

He goes limp, and Hannibal notes the time.

End Notes

Project MKUltra was a real thing! It lasted (officially) from 1953 until 1973, and involved subjecting a lot of people to very real psychiatric and physical abuse, both directly at the hands of the CIA and via third parties who didn't always know what they were contributing to. It has, because of its hidden nature and honestly very wild details, become a part of a lot of conspiracy theories.

Part of the program also involved the development and use of, you guessed it, psychic driving. (Though mostly in Canada.)

When I went looking for what exactly psychic driving is, and saw the link, my conspiracy theory trash brain latched on hard, and with the addition of some extreme liberties, here we are: sleeper agent Will Graham. All the confidence and violence of s3 Will, all of the chaos of s1. You're welcome.

(Title is a line from Muse's *MK Ultra*.)

ETA: There's going to be a (much longer) sequel fic - from Will's perspective. Stay tuned.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!